III. REMARKS

Claims 1-6 remain pending, and are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Banton et al., US 5,404,411. In addition, claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Sawada, US 6,181,437. Applicant has herein amended claims 1, 4 and 6. No new matter is believed added.

Applicant does not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections and reserves the right to present specific arguments regarding any rejected claims not specifically addressed. Further, Applicant reserves the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application.

Applicant traverses the rejections for the reasons that follow. Claim 1 (and similarly claims 4 and 6) recites, *inter alia*, "a system for processing blocks of pixels from an account number on the bank check in the black white image." Thus, Applicant's claimed invention is directed to processing account numbers on a bank check image. Applicant submits that the cited art fails to teach or suggest such a feature.

The Office Action alleged that Banton discloses "wherein the black white image comprises character data (column 2, lines 30-31)." Applicant submits that even if, arguendo, Banton implicitly teaches character data in the image, Banton does not teach processing the character data as recited in claim 1. Instead, Banton teaches the use of a font library unit to replace detected characters in the image with characters from the font library unit (column 2, lines 30-42). Thus, upon detection of a character based on the use of a template, "the image under the template is replaced by a stored grayscale image" (column 2, lines 37-38). Thus, Banton at best teaches replacing a detected character with a stored image. Nowhere does it teach processing (i.e., cleaning up) the existing image data in the manner claimed by Applicant.

The Office Action also alleges that Sawada discloses "wherein the black white image comprises character data (column 10, line 53)." Applicant submits that while Sawada does mention the term "character" in parenthesis, Applicant submits that the term "character" as used by Sawada is not referring to character data, but rather Sawada is using the term to refer to the nature or character of the line image (i.e., is the line a contour image). As discussed in column 9, lines 50-63, the image processing apparatus obtains "image signals for three lines, which are delayed by one line from each other," and then determines "whether the target pixel is on a contour image or not." Thus, the character of the line in Sawada refers not to character data, but the character of the line contained in the image. This is further evident from Figure 24, in which clearly there is no depiction of character data.

In addition, neither of the cited references teaches processing account data. Accordingly, for these reasons, Applicant submits that each of the independent claims is allowable over the cited art. Each of the claims not specifically addressed herein is believed allowable for the reasons stated above, as well as their own unique features.

Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that anything further is necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 3/27/08

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